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We conclude in the words of the eloquent Padre Marchese—"But though his enemies destroyed his body, they could not destroy his memory, which has been honourably recorded by every writer who does not shrink from stating truth. For more than two centuries, on the anniversary of his death, the ground that drank his blood was covered with garlands; and this fact attests the veneration in which Savonarola was held, and proved that his precepts did not perish from the memory of the Florentines.*"

HISTORY OF PURGATORY.

(Continued from page 98)

The existence of a purgatorial state in which departed souls were long and fearfully tormented, was urged upon the people's belief more earnestly and perseveringly than almost any other dogma of the church during the middle ages. The reason of this is obvious: not only did this doctrine increase the reverence with which the priests were regarded, on account of the vast influence which they were supposed to possess in that region, but still more on account of the great pecuniary emolument which it afforded them. From the time of Gregory I., at least, it was constantly believed that the torments of purgatory could be eased and abridged by the suffrages of the living; and chiefly by prayers, alms, and masses. The prayers were always performed by the clergy; the alms denoted money contributed to the church, and none but priests could perform mass. Thus, to inculcate the belief and dread of the flames of purgatory was the most direct way to fill the coffers of the Church, and most vigorously was the work effected. Century after century sermons were preached, books were written, visions were related, miracles invented, and every effort made by interested men to inspire mankind with the most alarming terrors respecting this fictitious place of woe. Nor can we wonder, that in a dark and superstitious age, the picture drawn of the torments of purgatory should inspire the people with overwhelming apprehensions. "To be nailed to the ground foot and hand; to be led by their torments to eat the ground; to be cast into cauldrons of burning metal, some up to the loins, others up to the breast," was surely enough to alarm the stoutest heart. All fear of hell was supplanted by the dread of purgatory, and the great concern of a sinner, under the influence of Roman teaching, was not to flee from the wrath to come, but to escape from the purgatorial fire.

The natural effect of all this was to drive men to those means which, as they were taught, were infallibly connected with the more speedy release or entire freedom from the tormenting flames. In the words of an old writer—

"The new doctrine and invention of purgatory, bred by superstition and nursed by covetousness, as it was managed, became a most forcible engine continually to drain the people's money: For, when men were made to believe that after death their souls should enter into a region of fire, there to suffer long and bitter torments, to be purged and fitted for the region of bliss, but yet to be eased there, and the sooner released, according to the measure and number of the masses, offices, and prayers, which should be made on their behalf here, while they lay broiling in that fearful state; people were put upon it to make the best provision they could in their lifetime, or at least at their deaths, that such helps and means should be used on their behalf as they might reasonably reckon upon a short and tolerable continuance there. . . . To this purpose, the founding and endowing of monasteries, abbeys, and nunneries, by the best and richer sort; and the colleges, free chapels, and chantries, by the middle sort of people, according to their respective abilities, and the apprehensions they had of this future state, all pointed at the good of the founder's (or his posterity's) soul, and the souls of such others as he appointed."

"But yet, not trusting to the uncertain charity of others, most persons strained to the utmost, and many most excessively, their fortunes considered, to leave some provision behind for that purpose, and most commonly by their last wills and testaments, which were accounted sacred; and thereby, or by acts executed in their lifetime, it was not rare for many men, though they had many children to provide for, or many debts to pay, to postpone all relations and considerations to this concern of the soul; and to appoint, and to take order for masses satisfactory, anniversaries, obits, requiems, dirges, placebos, trentals, lamps, lights, and other offices, to be performed daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly, as far as the sums destined would afford, for the ease and comfort of the testator's soul."

These were not the only means of deliverance from the purgatorial flame. Indulgences were rendered available to souls in purgatory. It is only since the year 1300—the commencement of the Romish jubilees—that these Papal impostures extended their influence even to the dead. Ecclesiastical historians attest the rapid progress of this superstition. In less than a century it spread everywhere, and at length the monks did not hesitate to say that they saw the souls leave purgatory the moment that the people purchased from them the indulgences for the dead.†

Alexander VI., in the Constitution for the Jubilee of 1500, it is well known, offered to all the penitent faithful who were willing to give alms for the repair of St. Peter's, a plenary indulgence, by virtue of which they could deliver from the fire of purgatory the souls of their parents, their friends, or other faithful Christians,

on whose behalf they had contributed money. The words of the bull itself are given in Raynald.* Since the time of Alexander VI., the following Popes have extended indulgences to souls in purgatory in their jubilee bulls—Clement VII., Julius III., and Gregory XIII.

Without speaking of plenary indulgences and those for the article of death, which have the necessary effect of conducting the soul immediately to paradise, which gains them; it is well known that there are an innumerable number of indulgences for the dead, both in the city of Rome, and the rest of the Roman Catholic world. Besides, the popes have granted them to many confraternities of regulars and seculars. They participate in all the prerogatives of the indulgences attached to the stations of Rome, where souls are delivered from purgatory. The Bull of *Crusado* places the Spaniards and Portuguese in a position to deliver an infinite number. It is even proved from a calculation made, that as, according to the bull, there are nine days in the year in which every one of the faithful, from the age of seven years and upwards, is able to draw a soul out of purgatory: the Spaniards alone might have sufficed, and more than that, to have delivered from Purgatory the souls of all the Roman Catholics who have died in the faith and in charity, from the very establishment of Christianity.† The Bull of Adrian VI. in favour of the Portuguese obtained the same advantage for them.

To these kinds of indulgences for the dead, must be added also those which are attached to privileged altars.‡ There are few churches which have not privileged altars attached to them, either in perpetuity, or, what is more common, for seven years, and to which the popes grant that the priest, who on certain days shall celebrate there a mass for the dead, shall deliver a soul from purgatorial flames; so that as the Jesuit Santarel has agreed, it would be easy in one day to deliver all the souls in purgatory.||

The frivolous conditions attached to certain indulgences of the dead deserve our notice. According to Thiers, the Carmelites pretend to have received from John XXII. a bull which they call the Sabbatine Bull, which promises to whosoever shall belong to this order, and wear the habit called the scapular, a plenary indulgence, with the promise of being at once delivered from purgatory. The Blessed Virgin is then introduced, saying—"I, the mother of grace, will descend the first Saturday after the death of all those who shall wear my habit, and who for the love of me have entered into my order, or my confraternity, or my society, and who have lived worthily in this life; I will deliver them from the pains of purgatory, and I will gloriously conduct them to the holy mountain of eternal life."¶ Other privileges, referring to souls in purgatory, belonging to the girle of St. Augustine and of St. Monica, are mentioned by the same writer.**

A still more extraordinary means of delivering souls from purgatorial fires belongs, or did belong, to another order of monks in the Church of Rome. According to a distinguished Romish writer—"The friars minors had once, they have it still in the present day, a very easy means of delivering souls from purgatory; for they declare that this may be accomplished as many times as a person enters and passes out of the church of our Lady of Portiuncula, from the first vespers of the first day of August until

* Ad an. 1499, n. 27.

† Les *Traites de l'Inferno*. Rom. Edit. de France, 1744, pp. 70, 74.

‡ PRIVILEGED ALTARS. Inscription on a marble slab in the Chapel of St. Mary and St. Francis, in the Church of St. Lorenzo, in Lucina.

Gregory the XIII. Pope. As a perpetual memorial of the thing. Bearing the stead, though unworthy, and following the example of our Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, consubstantial and co-eternal with the Father, who for the redemption of the human race, deigned to descend from the highest throne of heaven to the abyss of this world, and to assume our flesh from the Virgin's womb; we study to afford to the souls of Christ's faithful dead existing in purgatory—who, in charity united to God have departed this life, and have deserved to be assisted by the suffrages of the pious—opportune assistance from the treasures of the church; so that, as far as it shall please divine goodness, they may be more able to reach their heavenly country. Confining, therefore, to the divine mercy, and led to it by prayers on the part of our beloved son, Luigi Franza de Fermanis, Master of the ceremonies of our church, humbly offered to us for this purpose by the tenor of these presents we grant in perpetuity that as often as at the altar under the protection of the blessed Mary of grace, and of St. Francis, situated in the Church of St. Lawrence, in Lucina of the city, any priest, secular or regular, shall, of his own or of another's will, celebrate a mass for the liberation of one soul existing in purgatory, the same soul shall, from the treasury of the church, the merits of the same our Lord Jesus Christ, and all his saints, obtain the same indulgences, and remission of sins by the acceptance of divine clemency, and the said mass shall operate for the liberation of the same for which it shall be celebrated, as it would have obtained, and as it would have operated, if the said priest should for this cause celebrate a mass for the dead, at the altar situated in the church of St. Gregory of the city, deputed for that purpose. Ours concerning the not conceding indulgences for a like purpose, *ad instans* and other apostolic constitutions, and ordinances, and whatsoever other things to the contrary notwithstanding. Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, under the ring of the Fisherman, the 24th day of April, 1578. In the sixth year of our Pontificate.—*Ce Genus*.

On one side of the altar, the church of St. Maria della Pace, we find the following—"Every mass celebrated at this altar liberates a soul from purgatory."

Over the entrance to the catacombs in the church of St. Lorenzo fuori le mura—"This is the tomb most celebrated in the whole world of the cemetery of St. Cynila, where if any one shall perform the sacred rite for the dead, will evoke their souls from the pains of purgatory through the merits of the divine Lawrence." [A great number of inscriptions of a similar nature may be seen in Percy's *Romanism*, &c., pp. 1-3, and.]

§ Thiers iii., c. xciii., p. 313.

|| De *Jubili*, c. 3, d. 12, apud Thiers, *ibidem*.

¶ Thiers ubi sup. cxvi., p. 2. See this Bull in the *Speculum Carmelitanum*, Antwerp, 1680, 543 and 549.

** *Ibid.*, p. 286.

the second vespers of the following day; so that for another entry and departure out of the church one does not deliver more than one." This is stated by Cardinal Boniface di Vitalinis in his "Commentary on the Clementine Constitutions." It was confirmed by Honorius III., and by various bulls and briefs of the successors of Honorius. The actual words of the writers of this order are given by Thiers.*

The popes have never dared to say that they had any knowledge of the particular state of every soul after this life; they never ventured to decide positively; "these go to heaven, these depart to hell, these others remain in purgatory." How could they know? and in this ignorance what certainty can their indulgences for the dead possess? Granting the case that God has condemned a soul to one hundred years of purification in this middle state, is it not natural to believe that it will remain there one hundred years? Who can deliver it? The Pope! Is he able then to exalt himself above God?† To absolve those whom God has condemned? To mitigate or commute the punishment denounced on sinners by the decrees of his justice?‡

It now remains to give some particulars respecting the modern history of purgatory, and the superstitions connected with that unscriptural dogma. It is unnecessary to say that the Council of Trent—the modern standard of Romanism—openly declared its truth, and anathematized any one who entertained any doubt on the subject. The following is the decree of the council, passed at its twenty-fifth session:—"Since the Catholic Church, instructed by scripture and the ancient tradition of the fathers, hath taught in sacred councils, and most recently in this general council, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detained there are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, especially by the sacrifice of the altar, the holy council enjoins the bishops to take diligent care that the sound doctrine on the subject of purgatory, taught by the holy fathers and sacred councils, be believed by the faithful, be held, taught, and everywhere preached." After prohibiting difficult and subtle questions, and also such as are of doubtful character, the decree proceeds as follows:—"Let those things which tend to mere curiosity or superstition, or savour of filthy lucre, be prohibited as scandalous and offensive to Christians. Let the bishops take care that the suffrages of the living faithful—viz., masses, prayers, alms, and other works of piety, which the faithful have been accustomed to perform for departed believers, be piously and religiously rendered according to the institutions of the church, and whatever services are due to the dead, let them not be performed slightly, but diligently and carefully."

The advice here given, with reference to the manifold evils arising from the doctrine, might just as well have been spared. It is utterly irrational and absurd to suppose that an order of men entrusted with an engine of such tremendous power, could abstain from using it for selfish purposes. And such, indeed, has proved the case. The monstrous abuses springing out of this dogma, and the practices connected therewith, have increased rather than diminished since the Council of Trent.

The fathers of that Synod have exercised a very discreet prudence in the amount of information which they have thought proper to give respecting purgatory. They simply state the fact that there is a purgatory; and that the souls detained there are helped by the suffrages of the faithful. We are compelled, therefore, to go to the doctors of the church in order to ascertain, more particularly, the notions prevalent among Romanists in modern times on this important subject.

One of the most able and learned champions of the Romish Church was Cardinal Bellarmine. His writings have been repeatedly quoted by English Roman Catholics, as authority for explaining what the doctrines of that Church are; and from them we give the following extracts, as illustrating the sentiments entertained respecting purgatory, subsequently to the sitting of the Tridentine Synod. At the commencement of his "Treatise on Purgatory," the Cardinal defines it to be "a certain place where, as in a prison, those souls are purified after this life, which were not purified here, in order that they may be able to enter into heaven." "It is appointed," he says, "for those who die with venial sins, and again, for those with the temporary punishment of sin undischarged, though the sins themselves have been remitted." He describes the pains of purgatory as most horrible (*atrocissima*), exceeding, beyond all comparison, any sufferings upon earth, according to the uniform doctrine of the fathers. He says, also, that "the belief of purgatory is an article of faith, so that they who do not believe it shall never arrive there, but must be tormented in the eternal fire of hell."§

"Since many persons," says Bellarmine, "will not believe what they have never seen, it has pleased God sometimes to raise his servants from the dead, and to send them to announce to the living what they have really beheld."

* Thiers iii., cap. xvii., p. 259.

† 2 Thes. chap. ii., 4.

‡ John IV., of Portugal, died loaded with relics and plenary indulgences, and yet in spite of these indulgences, he had scarcely breathed his last, when prayers were at once commenced for the repose of his soul before privileged altars. Still more, 20,000 ducats were distributed by his orders in the poorest convents of the kingdom, to cause 100,000 masses (neither more nor less) to be said, with all speed, for the same object; and, as though these 100,000 masses were not sufficient, they hastened to establish, in the monastery where the king was buried, four masses to be said each day, for ever, for the peace of his soul, and its deliverance from purgatory.

§ De *Purg.*, cxv.

* Dublin Review, ut supra, p. 216.

† Rom. Horaebech. Lond. 1769.

‡ *Kochel. Hist. de la Ref. de la Suisse*, i., pp. 38, 39.

The Cardinal here refers to certain revelations, exhibited by him in another work, two or three of which we shall here give as strikingly illustrative of the actual belief of the Church of Rome:—

"A pious father of a family, in Northumberland, died after a long illness, in the early part of one night, but to the great terror of those who watched by his body, came to life again at the dawn of the following day. All but his faithful and affectionate wife fled at the sight of him; and to her he communicated, in the most soothing terms, the peculiar circumstances of his case; that he had indeed been dead, but was permitted to live again upon earth, though by no means in the same manner as before. In short, he sold all his property, divided the produce equally between his wife, his children, and the poor, and then retired to the monastery of Melrose. He there lived in such a state of unexampled mortification, as made it quite evident, even if he had not said a word on the subject, that he had seen things, whatever was the nature of them, which no one else had been permitted to behold."

But he disclosed it all.

"One," said he, "whose aspect was as light, and his garment glistening, conducted me to a valley of great depth and width, but of immeasurable length; one side of which was dreadful beyond expression, for its burning heat, and the other for its no less intolerable cold. Both were filled with the souls of men, which seemed to be tossed, as by the fury of a tempest, from one side to the other; for being quite unable to endure the heat on the right hand, the miserable wretches kept throwing themselves to the opposite side, into the equal torment of cold, and thence back into the raging flames. This, thought I, must be hell, but my guide answered to my thought, that it was not so—"This valley," said he, "is the place of torment for the souls of those who, after delaying to confess and expiate their sins, have at length, in the article of death, had recourse to penance, and so have died. These at the day of judgment will all be admitted into the kingdom of heaven, by reason of their confession and penance, late as it was. But, meanwhile, many of them may be arrested, and liberated before that day, by the prayers, alms, and fastings of the living, particularly by the sacrifice of the mass."

In the seventeenth century, St. Patrick's purgatory was made the subject of a religious drama by the Spanish poet Calderon. The piece begins with the entrance of Egenias, King of Ireland, clothed with skin, and very furious, attended by his two daughters. St. Patrick, and a recent convert to Christianity, by name Ludovicus Ennius, are wrecked upon the Irish coast, and appear before the impious monarch. St. Patrick relates to the king his life, and preaches the truths of the Gospel, but with no success. Subsequently the saint, horrified at the blasphemies of the king, prays for a divine manifestation to convert his countrymen, when two angels make their appearance, and reveal to him the celebrated cavern. The mouth of this fearful opening is exhibited on the stage, and, according to the stage directions, is to be the most horrible that can be contrived, and within it an aperture on the stage. "The impious king is induced to enter the cave; but instead of passing into purgatory, he falls through the aperture into the pit of hell. He sinks in with much noise—flames rise from below, and great cries are heard. The awful death of their sovereign leads to the conversion of his people. In the course of the drama, Ludovicus Ennius enters the cave, and with better fortune. He passes through purgatory, and on his return relates to his auditors the wonders of that fearful region. His account is nothing more than an abridgement of the old legend, which we have already given, of the descent of Sir Owaine. Ludovicus finishes his relation by giving a long list of authorities—many of them of modern date—in proof of the truth of the legend of the purgatory of St. Patrick."

At the commencement of the eighteenth century, appeared in France a work intended for popular use, entitled "A History of the Life and of the Purgatory of St. Patrick, Archbishop and Primate of Ireland, with numerous prayers; translated into French by R. P. Francois Bouillon, of the Order of St. Francis, and Bachelor in Theology." This book was widely circulated in France, it appears, for more than half a century, for the first censorial approbation bears the date of 1701, whilst the other is dated 1742. It contains a life of St. Patrick, composed from all the most absurd legends in existence respecting him. The writer then proceeds to give a description of the state of souls after death. Afterwards we have the history and description of the purgatory of St. Patrick, and the various ceremonies connected with it, and the various visions which have been seen there, in the truth of all of which he expresses his fullest belief. Finally, the latter part of the book is occupied with "The veritable relation of the History of Louis Ennius, chiefly taken from the drama of Calderon;" to which reference has already been made.

About the middle of the eighteenth century we find Pope Benedict XIV. preaching and publishing a sermon at Rome, expressly in favour of this ridiculous legend of St. Patrick.

It is well observed by the author, to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of this work, that it serves—

"To show the kind of religious information which was spread among the middle and lower classes of society in France by the (Roman) Catholics, so late as the last century. Two doctors in theology, of the faculty of Paris, sign their names to an approbation dated 1742, in which they declare that they 'have read through this mass of absurdity and falsehood, and that they have found nothing in it contrary to faith or morals.' It was, indeed, not more than two or three years after the date first mentioned, that Pope Benedict XIV. preached and published at Rome a sermon in favour of St. Patrick's purgatory." By such doctrines

and representations, the Popish system kept its hold on the minds of the simple and ignorant people, and the same policy which led the (Roman) Catholic priesthood to continue them in this condition, and to perpetuate their influence, made them oppose and persecute men of science, such as Galileo, who were labouring to enlighten the world, and whose experiments and discoveries naturally tended to dispel the cloud of superstitious legends."

It is not our intention here to refer to the effect of this doctrine in dishonouring the Saviour, and rendering his salvation an incomplete work. We have already dwelt upon this. Our object now is simply to point out the demoralizing influence which purgatory and its practices have exercised upon members of the Romish Church, for upwards of a thousand years. The pernicious consequences of the doctrine arise chiefly from the two following causes:—In the first place, it removes all fear of hell from the mind of Roman Catholics, and substitutes for it the dread of a temporary state of suffering. Secondly, it associates the performance of prayers, the celebration of masses, &c., with deliverance from this place of temporary woe. The believer in this unscriptural dogma constantly lives under the influence of a spiritual opiate.

It is the acknowledged doctrine of the Romish Church, that no Roman Catholic can go to hell, except he dies in mortal sin—unconfessed and unabated. But if he applies to the priest, he is bound to grant him absolution on the mere performance of regret for such a sin, and thus the eternal punishment is instantly converted into the temporary suffering of purgatory. The consequence is, that the fear of hell is virtually banished in the Church of Rome: we do not mean merely from the exemplary and moral, but also from the abandoned and the profligate. The only possible case under which any Romanist would be doomed to "the outer darkness," the place of eternal woe, according to the Church, is, by failing through some accident to obtain a confessor in his last hours. The probabilities of this chance are so exceedingly small, that it is rarely thought of. There is, too, a saint worshipped in the Church of Rome—St. Barbara—whose special office it is to deliver her votaries from this possible calamity. Hence, as a general—we may perhaps say universal—thing, the people consider themselves as free from any danger of incurring the sentence of eternal death, as if the doctrine were entirely blotted out of the Word of God.

In the place of this eternal punishment, the Roman Catholic looks forward to the sufferings of purgatory, which, although considered by some doctors to be equal in intensity to those of hell, possess this essential difference—that they are limited in their duration. And here the fearful evils of this doctrine at once appear. It is the eternity of future punishment which gives it all its weight with those who are under the dominion of worldly or sensual passions. Take away the endless duration of "the wrath to come," and men will brave even the frowns of an angry judge. By substituting purgatory, then, for the punishment of hell, papal doctors removed the only effectual check to wickedness which worldly men experience. The passions of the heart are violent and ungovernable—the temptations of the present life are strong and overpowering—the pleasure which is offered to us by our lusts is *present*, a *sensible*, and a *certain* good. On the other hand, the punishment which men are taught by the Bible to dread, as the consequences of gratifying their sinful desires, is a *future*, a *vague*, and to them an *uncertain* evil yet it contains, amidst all this, one element, which compensates for all these disadvantages. It is *ETERNAL*. It is justly remarked by a modern writer—"A profligate will face unshrinkingly the prospect of distant suffering, and bear, even in the thought of hell, everything but its eternity and its despair; and Popery, to meet his weakness, converts hell into purgatory." What, then, should we say to a system of religion which deliberately and advisedly withdraws this element from the future woe, and leaves man thus exposed to the temptations arising from the world, the flesh, and the devil? Surely the exercise of the greatest charity cannot justify us in acquitting Romanists of thus removing from society one of its chief barriers against human depravity, increasing, to an extent which we can hardly estimate too greatly, the amount of human wickedness and crime!

But this is not all. As we have observed, there is a second consideration which must not be omitted. Not satisfied with practically substituting for hell, purgatory, and thus converting the eternal punishment of the second death into a mere temporary state of suffering, Rome provides her votaries with such an endless variety of deliverances from this temporary state, the even that is reduced oftentimes to a nonentity, especially in the case of the rich. There are masses, and obits, and equiems, and dirges. There are confraternities, and indulgences, and privileged altars, and blessed beads, and such countless host of other Papal impostures, all having for their object the important task of fetching out souls from a terrible fire, that it would weary the reader's patience to recite their names.

We are able to confirm the conclusions to which we have thus been led by the testimony of one of the most intelligent and able witnesses at the bar of the House of Lords, during the agitation of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill. The Rev. John Arnet, then a dissenting minister at Cork, declared as follows:—

"No Roman Catholic of the low orders has any dread of a

final perdition. I have spoken with them frequently on this subject, and never found one of them that supposed he could go to hell. If they die in mortal sin, their doctrine is, that they must go to perdition; if, however, they apply to the priest for absolution, he must give it; and in the case of absolution, which is administered on their professing a regret for their sins, they go only to purgatory, and they depend on these books of orders for their release from it, and hence the punishments of futurity in their estimation are only temporary punishments, and this conviction has a very injurious effect upon the views and conduct of the people."

Here the conclusions of reason and the experience of actual life perfectly harmonize. We know not, then, how it is possible to escape the lamentable fact, that one of the most essential and important doctrines of the Romish faith is fraught with such evil results, that wherever it prevails, it must necessarily produce immorality and crime. The effect of the doctrine of a state of purgatory, from which the suffrages of the faithful could deliver them, upon men of the world, was to take away that which constitutes the great check to depravity—the dread of everlasting woe, and thus the sinful passions were left to riot in unrestricted freedom.

DOCTOR CULLEN'S PASTORAL.

TWELVE months have just elapsed since Pope Pius IX. announced to the world that a new glory had been added to the crown of the Virgin Mary, and "her honour increased" by a dogmatic decree, in which he declared that from the first instant of her conception she was by a special grace and singular privilege, preserved from all stain of original sin, and that it had been so revealed by God himself.

Our readers will, no doubt, also remember that in the same letter apostolic Pope Pius asserted that the Church had always held the same doctrine, and that all the illustrious monuments of a venerable antiquity, and the clear, unanimous opinions of the most eminent Fathers and Doctors of the Church, testified that it had done so.

We have now before us a pastoral letter addressed to the (Roman) Catholic clergy and laity of the diocese of Dublin, by the Most Rev. Dr. Cullen, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, in which after exulting in this great achievement, by which "the last wreath of glory has been added to the crown that adorns the Virgin's brow," he reminds his readers of "the raptures of joy with which the decision of the Sovereign Pontiff was received," when, "in the centre of Christendom, it was greeted with the peals of a thousand joyful bells and the thunders of artillery, and an illumination of the whole city." "The immortal Pontiff," says Dr. Cullen, "having examined the teaching and tradition of our forefathers in the faith, and considered the wishes and pious desires of all faithful Christians, issued, after mature deliberation, on the ever-memorable day of the 8th of December, 1854, his solemn and infallible definition declaring that 'the doctrine has been revealed by God, and is, therefore, to be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful, which teaches that the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first moment of her conception, was, by a special grace of the Almighty, and by a singular privilege, through the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, preserved from all stain of original sin.' "Rome," he adds, "has spoken, and all controversy has ceased." Dr. Cullen has, however, not thought it wise to add the next paragraph in this decree of the Pope:—"Wherefore, if any shall dare to think otherwise, let them know and understand that they are condemned by their own judgment—that they have suffered shipwreck of the faith, and subjected themselves to the penalties justly established, if what they think they should dare to signify by word, writing, or any other outward means."

Dr. Cullen probably knew that high-sounding threats in this country would scarcely intimidate men from saying or even printing what they think, or induce them to believe that they must make "shipwreck of the faith once delivered to the saints," or feel condemned by their own judgment, if they did not at once rejoice at the new wreath of glory so tardily conferred by Pope Pius on the Blessed Virgin in the middle of the 19th century, or fail to feel "all ground for difficulties and doubts removed" by what "is now proposed to the Church under the seal and sanction of infallibility." He, therefore, resorts to other methods; and in condescension to "the doubts and difficulties," which he expects to remove by means somewhat more suited to the atmosphere of Great Britain than anathemas and excommunications, after promising to all the faithful who shall attend the devotions of the present Novena a plenary indulgence, he goes on, with an unusual condescension in one who fills so high an office as that of "Delegate Apostolic," to quote some of the "ancient Fathers" to show, he says, with what "decisiveness antiquity professed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception." Nay, by what we must certainly consider an additional favour, Dr. Cullen actually condescends to add the very editions, volumes, and pages where his extracts are to be found, as if he really felt that the practice which the CATHOLIC LAYMAN has adopted from the very first was (as we are sure it really is) the only one likely to satisfy those who dare to think or inquire for themselves upon such sub-

* Wright, as before, p. 156.

* Wright, as before, p. 159.

* Evidence before the Lords, p. 290, 15th April, 1855.

† "A Deo revelatum."